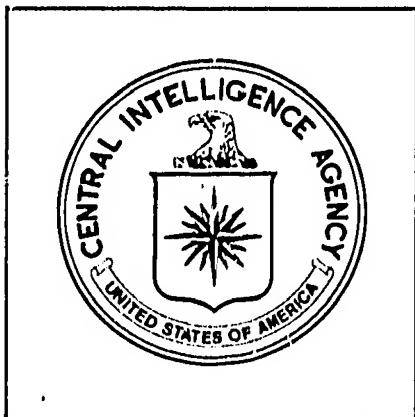


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Phone: 143-6884

Recovery of Listening Devices from Sea
around Iceland

The discovery of two sonic buoys on Icelandic beaches on February 20 has received wide coverage in the press. The Reykjavik government's primary concern at this point is what to tell the press in order to ward off demands for more information until the government has completed its "investigation."

Press reports claim that the buoys are listening devices designed to track ships and submarines and are part of a surveillance system connected to land by cable. According to the press the origin of the devices is not known, but various parts allegedly were manufactured in the Soviet Union.

Opposition Social Democratic Chairman Grondal claimed in a press article on February 25 that there is an extensive network of listening devices on the ocean floor between Iceland and Greenland and between Iceland and Scotland. The existence of the devices, which are used to check on the movements of nuclear submarines, points up the great strategic value of Iceland, according to Grondal.

The buoys are currently in the custody of the NATO facility at Keflavik. In order to avoid charges that the devices were delivered to the NATO base prematurely, government officials have played up their own investigation. The Icelandic government will not release the devices to the defense force for removal from Iceland until the examination is completed. Foreign Minister Agustsson arranged for state television photographers to take pictures of government officials examining the devices.

The probable Soviet origin of the buoys may ease, at least for the time being, Icelandic criticism of the US presence at Keflavik. (Confidential No Foreign Dissem)

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[REDACTED]
Phone: 143-5205Disarmament Conference Reconvenes

The spring session of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) opens today in Geneva. In addition to the usual agenda items such as limitations on chemical weapons and a comprehensive nuclear test ban, the committee will take up issues assigned to it last fall by the UN General Assembly. These include the modification of the environment for military purposes and the implications for arms control of peaceful nuclear explosions. The CCD is also charged with conducting a study on the question of nuclear-free zones--a primary disarmament concern at the recently concluded General Assembly.

The 31-member committee--which is a non-UN body under the co-chairmanship of the US and USSR--remains the major multilateral forum for the consideration of arms control measures. Since the successful negotiation of the Biological Weapons Convention by the Committee in 1972, however, little substantial progress on a broad range of other disarmament issues has been realized. The Conference's nonaligned members, in particular, seem frustrated by the sterility of the committee's continuing discussions and may use the session to increase pressure on the superpowers to negotiate meaningful disarmament pacts or--as India did during the course of last year's summer session--defend their own ambitions for development of nuclear explosives. (Confidential)

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